

## From the Hand of Joseph Munsinger

Joseph Munsinger was Superintendent of Parks in Saint Cloud from 1930 to 1946, working in that position until his death at age 70. In the early 1940s he wrote out two sets of notes: a statement of the work done in the parks under his supervision, and a projection of the work he saw yet to be done. Recently, his son John Munsinger shared with us copies of those writings, which I have transcribed here much as originally written. Because of the condition of handwritten notes, and because of many changes in our parks since Joseph Munsinger was in charge, you may find some of the names and places a bit of a puzzle, as I did. But in reading them you will get a sense of his work and what our city parks were like back in the '30s and '40s. You will also come to know Superintendent Munsinger better.

—Donna Gorrell, Editor

### Work done in Parks under Supervision of J. P. Munsinger, Supt. of Parks

#### 1st Park

Park at 12 ave & 1st st S. Pools and mound was completed. I finished rest of Park. Quite a few plants were donated. Mr. L. R. Swift, Frank Thielman, J. P. Munsinger, and Reading Room Society donated plants.

#### 2nd Park, William's Gardens

We changed the contour of the entire park. Cutting down the north end about 2 1/2 ft. to give a better vision to people living on 9 ave. & 2 st. South approaching corner. Stone work was done by Mr. Lawrence Arowitch.

#### 3rd Park, Now Called Munsinger Park

This site was an old Saw Mill site. We hauled in about 1000 loads of Black ground, clay, and peat. Stones were hauled with our trucks, all local stone from within 10 miles from Park.

#### 4th Park, Hester Park

Was in the rough. Landscaped ravine & balance of Park. With Mr. Arowitch as foreman on Rock work & Mr. Gust Fritchingter looking after W.P.A. crew on rest of work.

#### Empire Park

Built Stone wall & steps. Put in Ramp.

### Work still to be done

#### Eastman Park

Finish filling & resurfacing North End of lake. Put in a good fence, sidewalk, water system, hedge, sod & grass seed. Lay out 4 tennis courts, where hockey rink is. Finish planting evergreen on dike. At south end of lake, finish fill, water system on east side.

#### Hester Park

Finish stone wall & terrace on river bank. Sodding, seeding & planting.

#### Boys Camp

Terrace river bank on each side of stone steps same as at Hester Park using rough sod. Finish trimming trees. Leveling & build bridge across river at West line. Fix up grounds better for more sports.

#### Little Tryangle

At Maine & 7th sts. Near Osseo tracks. Make a nice flower bed. Needs new dirt & grass seed.

#### Jim Hill Monument

Finish planting, sodding & walks, also Granite walls.

#### Killian Boulevard

Finish hauling black dirt, plant trees, put in water into each island. Large ones need 2 runs. Sod & grass seed.

#### Wilson Park

Put in retaining wall for about 1200 ft. Not too high. Prune trees. Should have a building leveled off for baseball ground and done a lot tree trimming & grubbing also fixed up beach.

#### Boys Camp

Bridge, grubbing, tree trimming, etc. 28 ave & 4th st N

Nursery. Put in fence & quite a lot of planting. When I started, there was one flower bed in City Parks. It was in Central Park, now Barden Place. We also planted shade trees on Washington Memorial Drive & 16000 evergreens on hill near Hillside Golf Course.

#### Seberger Park

Pool, & leveling for baseball & other sports. Pool is too deep & steep. Should put in new floor about 1 1/2 ft. higher. Put in building for Rest Rooms & warming house for winter. Level ground for more play ground. Level space at various parts of city for skating rinks. Put in clay to keep water in place (Pan Town) and any place city will furnish ground.

—Joseph Munsinger, transcribed by Donna Gorrell



Photo: courtesy of Stearns History Museum, St. Cloud



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## Blenheim Palace Gardens

by Anne Przybilla

Blenheim Palace was at the top of my granddaughter's list of things for her mother and me to see while she was busy with end-of-semester tests and term papers at Oxford University. We are so glad we took her advice.

The name Blenheim comes from the decisive 1704 Battle of Blenheim. Queen Anne was so grateful to John Churchill, the 1st Duke of Marlborough, for his leadership in the defeat of the French at this battle that she gave him the land where the palace stands today. It was little more than a fenced deer park at the time, but it was here that the Queen promised to build a house for the Duke at her own expense. By the time the flamboyant baroque edifice was completed seventeen years later, some of the greatest architects, designers, landscape gardeners, painters, carvers, and sculptors of the 18th century had taken part in its creation.

Construction on the palace, now designated as a world heritage site, began in 1705 and continued until 1722. Historically, it is the principal residence of the Dukes of Marlborough (the 12th Duke and his family live there today) and was the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill. With its 108-ft. library and 67-ft. high Great Hall, it is the largest country house in England and the only nonroyal residence in Great Britain to hold the title of palace.

The fascinating and illustrious history of the Palace reads like a novel, but the focus of this article will be the grounds and gardens of this palatial home.

It was a sunny spring morning when my daughter, Chris, and I set out on the bus for the short eight-mile ride through the Cotswold countryside to the village of Woodstock where the lavish country estate is located.

The main approach to the palace is from the west and as you drive down the long tree-lined boulevard the

view is deceptive. The house was designed to be seen from a distance, which probably explains its immense size that seems quite overdone when you get up close to it. We spent a couple of hours touring the palace itself before venturing outside to the terrace for lunch and our first glimpse of the formal gardens.

What a view! We were seated at the upper edge of the water terrace gardens and they seemed to go on forever as they flowed down the gentle slope. Very formal in design, the area that separates the water terraces features an array of classic Greek sculptures. Depending on which source you read, the female faces of the two unique sphinxes located there are supposedly modeled after Consuelo Vanderbilt, the American heiress and first wife of the 9th Duke of Marlboro, or Gladys Deacon, his second wife who is said to have been his favorite wife.

After lunch we followed the 1.5-mile scenic lakeside path to Blenheim Dam. Early on in our hike we were startled by ring-necked pheasants that brazenly approached us as if they were expecting us to feed them. Pheasants here in Minnesota never exhibit such behavior without ending up on the dinner table.

We also came upon the oddest bridge I have ever encountered. Though he had no formal training as such, John Vanbrugh was the man initially hired as the architect to build Blenheim. When he saw that vast sweeping landscape, he immediately conceived a grandiose plan to build the finest bridge in Europe across a boggy marshland. Though the Duke and Duchess both thought



the design was too ostentatious and expensive, Vanbrugh was not to be dissuaded from his plan. The bridge was indeed an amazing physical structure, but it was widely ridiculed at the time. Resembling a Roman aquaduct, it appeared odd and grotesquely out of proportion. It contained 33 rooms, many of which had fireplaces and chimneys. Though the bridge still stands there today, it does not seem quite so out of proportion now because the two lower floors have been completely flooded in order to make it blend into its surroundings. If you did not read this interesting tale in the guide book you would never know that the major part of the structure was no longer visible.

At the farthest point of the path we came to the cleverly constructed dam built to simulate a natural cascading waterfall. It was designed by the renowned British landscape architect, Lancelot "Capability" Brown, who was hired in 1763 and worked for eleven years to correct the problems caused by Vanbrugh's lack of expertise and experience. Capability's dam created the giant lake that flooded the lower floors of Vanbrugh's ungainly bridge thus bringing its size into harmony with its surroundings. Brown also naturalized the woods on the estate, but his main contribution was to simplify the gardens by eliminating severe geometric structures near the house and replacing them with rolling lawns to create extensive views that made the landscape seem even larger than it was. The 300th anniversary of Brown's birth occurs in 2016 and to celebrate the occasion and honor his life and talent, Blenheim

Palace will host a range of commemorative activities throughout the year, coordinated with similar celebrations across England where many of the 170 gardens Capability designed still draw tourists today.

The path we took back to the palace led us through the Churchill Memorial Garden. Created to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the death of Sir Winston Churchill (January 24, 1965), it is the newest garden at Blenheim and is located next to the Temple of Diana, where Churchill proposed to his beloved wife Clementine in the summer of 1908. The path through this garden is dotted with milestones that represent the 90 years of this remarkable man's life.

The Italian Garden is the Duke of Marlborough's private garden, but we were able to enjoy its symmetrically ornate scrollwork hedges and huge topiary animals as we strolled by on a raised public walkway making our way to the train stop. There we boarded a miniature train with open cars that transported us to the pleasure gardens area where the butterfly house, the lavender garden, and the Marlborough Maze are located.

The Butterfly House gives the opportunity to see tropical butterflies in free flight in their natural habitat. Depending on the season, you can see exotic butterflies from as far away as Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Central and South America. A special hatchery contains the pupae of the many species of butterflies that are actually bred on site, and visitors are able to watch as new butterflies emerge from their cocoons and dry their delicate wings before taking flight in the flower-filled glass conservatory that is the butterfly house.

The Marlborough Hedge Maze was our real adventure of the day. Designed to reflect the history and architecture of Blenheim Palace, it is the second largest hedge maze in the world. It covers 1.8 acres, but you don't realize just how

large an area that really is until you're lost in it. The two linear miles of dense Green Yew hedges are well over six feet high, so there's no going through them or over them to find your way out of this complex maze. The maze is closed in December each year while a team of five gardeners spends two weeks using levels and specially designed hedge trimmers to precisely trim and shape the hedges. The cuttings from these yearly prunings are collected and used to supply the pharmaceutical industry with the raw materials to manufacture chemotherapy treatments for cancer patients.

When we arrived at the maze, there were no other adventurers there and perhaps that should have been a clue to us as we eagerly entered the maze. Laughing and giggling we confidently made our way down one corridor and around a corner to the next. After a while, when we were starting to consider the fact that we might be lost, Chris recalled that her husband (a left-handed, AP physics teacher) once told her that mazes were easy because if you remember to follow the wall to the left you will always find your way out. So we kept to the left for a long time and were still lost. We found out later that what he neglected to tell her was that you must use this tactic from the time you enter the maze or it won't work. (You can also follow the right wall with the same results.) Alas, we started that plan when it was too late to do us any good.

Our salvation was the two tall wooden scaffolds that provide vantage points for planning your way out, but you have to find them before you can use them and that took a while. We did eventually find them, and though it took some time we were finally able to plot a successful escape—and just in the nick of time too. We had to run to catch the last train back to the palace in order to catch the last bus back to Oxford. We made it ...time flies when you're having fun!

## THANKS for the Root Beer Floats!

MCBS is grateful to the following local businesses whose contributions helped us provide the root beer floats that accompanied our 2015 Music in the Gardens summer concerts:  
Kemps — Dairy Queen on 25th  
Bernick — Thrivent Financial  
Coborn's — Strategic Equipment  
Mr. Twisty

Our thanks go also to the faithful volunteers who served this year's root beer floats:

Mary Margaret & Gene Bjorklund  
Ginny Clendenin  
Chris & John Felsch  
Lorene Hark  
Karen & Chuck Henneman  
Jack Kelly  
Peg Killoren  
Bev & Norm Koepp  
Sally Koester  
Sara Magee  
Kathy Matthies  
Vera Peterson  
Joyce Pohl  
Nikki Rajala  
Kayte Regan  
Mary & Dan Rethmeier  
Lois Sjoberg  
Susan Smith  
Jan & Tom Stavros  
Janelle Van Pinnon  
Bill Vossler  
Mari Walker

We appreciate, too, the help of garden staff with setup, transport of supplies, and cleanup, as well as the contributions of everyone who fed the donations jar on the floats table.

It's the support of all of you that enables us to continue this popular community program each year.

—Elaine Carter, Root Beer Floats Chair,  
Volunteers Chair

**Munsinger Clemens Music in the Gardens 2016** dates are June 12 and 26, July 10 and 24, August 7 and 21. Here are some names you may be hearing: Pachanga Society, George Maurer, Monday Night Jazz, Ring of Kerry, Harpers Chord, and Brendan Bushman.

**Art Fair in the Gardens July 21, 2016**  
Music by Cristina Seaborn, Pushing Chain,  
Twin City Trio



# Winter Dormancy

by William M. Cook

Fall has now transitioned to winter, and the dominant colors in nature (and in Clemens and Munsinger Gardens) are now brown, or perhaps white if we have a significant snowfall by the time you read this. Consider for a moment other adjectives commonly used to describe winter: bare, barren, bleak, bitter, dark, desolate, dismal. And these only require the first few letters of the alphabet! Along with many other words, these descriptors present an image that nature is dead, and the landscape is lifeless.

When my son was three or four, I can remember a sunny afternoon in October when he was upset by seeing the blackened leaves of annual flowers, killed by the season's first hard frost the night before. Even this week (mid-November, as I write this) he was noticeably saddened when I came inside with a handful of green leaves, and told him this was the last installment of wild-grown food I could collect for his guinea pigs until spring. This sadness is hardly unique to children; how many adults are depressed by the transition from summer to autumn to winter? But some of this is based on an emotional misunderstanding; the world is not dying in autumn, but just selectively going dormant. Your garden is not dead (unless, perhaps, you plant and then harvest only annual vegetables), but just waiting for spring. There are indeed an amazing number of different ways that life forms survive the cold of winter.

But first, not all life pauses for winter. Imagine a chickadee twittering from a spruce tree on a frosty morning. The birds that do not migrate are very much active and alive, and must face the constant challenges of freezing to death and finding enough food. The spruce is also fully alive; conifers largely remain green in the winter, and while photosynthesis slows dramatically the tree is able to collect a little energy from the sun no matter how cold it is. Voles scurry through tunnels, or even nest in your potted plants. The shrew that rustles beneath layers of leaves and snow, and the coyote that howls in the distance; most warm-blooded animals that stay here are as alive as they are in summer. But not all—the woodchuck that nibbled the tops off your carrots in summer is alive but doesn't look much like it. The ground squirrels, bats, and (to a lesser degree) bears that sleep the winter away, depending on fat reserves, drop their body temperature to slightly above freezing and their heart rate to 15% of normal.

Most plants, of course, are inactive during the winter. There are two main strategies to arrange this. Perennial plants store energy and nutrients in their roots, safely underground from the worst of the cold, comparable to that woodchuck

fattening itself up in the fall. They die back to the ground and then use those reserves to keep roots alive during the winter, and then to regrow foliage again in the spring until the new shoots can photosynthesize again. This is why, for instance, you don't want to overharvest your rhubarb plant during the summer, else it doesn't have enough foliage to build up sufficient stores to survive the winter. Annual plants feel "more dead" than perennials in the fall; you pull them up and throw them away without concern for their roots, but it is only the adult plant that is dead. The seeds scattered on the ground are incipient life, just waiting their turn when the soil warms again.

Deciduous trees have a particular challenge in our environment during winter. A 32-degree temp doesn't sound very warm, but parts of plants that are underground can't get much colder than that. Above ground, trunks and branches are exposed to the -30, -20 or colder that the air drops to, and are thus particularly vulnerable. A small number of non-woody plants try to keep shoots alive above ground all winter; these usually expect there to be snow on top of them, providing them with insulation similar to being underground. One of my favorite adaptations is of prickly pear cactus, which does not die back to the ground but withdraws water from its pads and looks shriveled and bent over during the cold months. However, they straighten up and rehydrate again in the spring.

Cold-blooded animals take a variety of strategies to last out the winter. Their metabolisms naturally slow as the temperature drops, so they do not try to stay active. Reptiles and amphibians generally spend the winter as dormant adults, underground or under the water. Invertebrates use all manner of different tricks. Insects can pause their life cycle at any stage in the fall; new queen wasps and ants (and many others) find a safe hole to crawl into and wait until spring to start their families. But other insects can be found alive only as eggs, larvae, or even pupae in the winter. The safest places again are underground, but above-ground vegetation can also serve as a winter hideaway, even if it is dead. This is why, for instance, that you are recommended to cut and throw away asparagus stalks in the fall, since they can harbor beetles that emerge to eat the new shoots in the spring. Many insects in diapause have special chemicals in their body that resist freezing solid; they literally have antifreeze in their blood in the winter. A small number of species are active and even breed in the snow—look out for these on relatively warm, sunny days.

So, as you look out over a still and mostly silent winter landscape, don't think of it as dead. Instead, imagine the many ways that all of its inhabitants are still alive, if dormant. They are all waiting for spring, just as your garden is.

# Munsinger Clemens Gardens—Looking Back on the 2015 Season

by Joan Andersen

If you visited the Gardens this year, you probably agree with me that they were exceptionally beautiful. The season was long and rain was plentiful and at the right time. There were drier periods between rains, which is perfect for growing healthy flowers. Garden Supervisor Nia Primus reports that the great weather meant the powdery mildew often found on rudbeckia and zinnias in late summer was not seen until fall. There were no major disease or bug problems this season.

Another "happy" is that there were lots of butterflies and other pollinators in the Gardens. Gardens staff works to minimize bug and disease problems by choosing disease resistant cultivars, planting the "right plant in the right place," and spraying for bugs and disease only if absolutely necessary.

In a previous article I reported about the large variety of succulent plants used in the Gardens. They can be found in the urns and planters as well as in a special succulent bed near the gift shop. Most of these plants are not hardy in our area so they need to be taken in to the Greenhouse for winter. In mid-September, gardeners started pulling plants out of their pots and bringing them indoors. Succulents are tough—they have relatively small roots for their size because they store water in their leaves or stems. They can survive just sitting around for a while before being replanted. Large succulents such as agave will spend the winter growing in kiddie pools of sand. Smaller ones will be potted in 4" squares. Staff also looks for "babies" and pots them up to grow for next season.

Nia evaluates all the plants by taking photos and keeping records. Plants make her favorites list if they bloom all summer, need minimal deadheading, remain disease free, and—most of all—if they are really pretty. It is a bonus if they attract bees and butterflies. She shared a list of some her favorites this season:

**Agastache "Blue Fortune"** has lavender blue flower spikes. It is 24-26" tall and blooms from summer until frost. It is in the hyssop family and has a licorice scent. It prefers sun, slightly alkaline soil, and drier conditions.

**Lisianthus "Mariachi Pink"** has pale pink double flowers that look like roses. It is 24-30" tall and flowers are borne on top of the stems. It is known as a long-lasting cut flower.

**Cissus Discolor "Rex Begonia Vine"** has leaves with a striking green and silver pattern. The underside of the leaf is red. It has a vining growth habit and must have part to full shade.

**Coleus "Ruby Dreams"** is a sun coleus with light green leaves and red purple veins. It is a large plant, 24-36" high and wide, and grows in shade or sun. It is suitable for a large container or the garden.



**Evolvulus "Blue Daze"** has blue flowers on a bushy plant that is 12" tall by 24" wide. The color is a really unusual clear blue, not purple-blue. It needs sun and good drainage.

**Gomphrena "Pinball White"** has round pure white flowers. The plant is 12-18" tall and is heat and drought tolerant. It can be used in the garden or containers.

**Nassella Mexican Feather Grass** is often called ponytail grass. It is 12-24" tall and has green foliage with soft tan flowers in late summer. It can be used in the garden or as a tall center plant in a container.

**New Guinea Impatiens "Divine Series"** is a seed-grown New Guinea impatiens available in a range of colors in red, lavender, orange, violet, pink, and white. The plants are 10-14" high and wide and are very resistant to the disease called downy mildew that has severely infected regular impatiens. They can be grown best in areas with morning sun and afternoon shade. A little sun makes them bloom better, but avoid hot sun.

**Petunia "Cascadias Indian Summer"** has flowers that open to orange and mature to salmon pink—a new color for a petunia. It has a cascading growth habit that is perfect for containers.

**Plectranthus "Velvet Elvis"** has very dark green foliage, purple stems, and spikes of lavender blue tubular flowers. It is 12-24" high and 24-30" wide so it is suitable for a large container as well as planting in the garden.

**Rudbeckia "Cherokee Sunset"** has varying shades of yellow, tan, orange, or brown, with dark brown centers. It is 24-30" tall and 12-16" wide. It starts blooming in summer and continues until frost.

These plants should be available at good garden centers next season. When you visit the gardens, be sure to ask the gardeners about the plants you like. They are happy to share their knowledge.



# Looking Back on the Virginia Clemens Rose Garden for 2015

by Joan Andersen

I have to say that I personally enjoyed the 2015 season for growing roses. How many years can we say that the rain fell at the right time and the temperatures were mostly in the range enjoyed by roses? Adequate rain and moderate temperatures kept disease problems at a manageable level. Roses generally bloom more if the temperatures are not too hot, so they put on quite a show in late summer.

As reported in the spring newsletter, there were a lot of new roses this year. Many came to the greenhouse in March as bare root plants. They were potted and put in the greenhouse for two months until they developed strong roots and grew lots of leaves. Then they were moved outside to a sheltered area in preparation for planting in a permanent home in the Gardens.

Garden Rose Specialist Deb Keiser says that roses love growing in a container and that the new ones had very impressive roots from all that time in a pot. Many were already blooming and looked wonderful the moment they were planted in the Gardens. If you purchase a bare-root rose, she recommends that you grow it in a pot for a while instead of just planting it in the ground.

In the spring it is necessary that you wait to see how the roses leaf out and grow before deciding if they need to be replaced. Sometimes a shrub rose will die back to the crown and you must be patient and watch for new growth. Deb does not want to remove a plant too soon before she is sure it is not coming back.

The roses at the Gardens grew fast this season and many were still blooming in late October when they finally had to be cut back in preparation for winter protection. (Only the tender roses in Virginia Clemens and Upper Test gardens were cut back. Hardy shrub roses are not pruned back until spring.) On November 3, they were mulched extra heavily with compost in anticipation of another snowless winter. Believe it or not, garden staff has been waiting for the weather to be cold enough so that the roses stay dormant under their insulating construction blankets! The blankets will be applied to the Virginia Clemens and Upper Test gardens before Thanksgiving. In past years, the blankets were applied no later than November 13.

Deb trials new roses and she shared this information on the more successful ones with me. Unless noted to be zone 4, all of these roses will need winter protection in our area. Some of the hardier and most disease resistant ones are listed here:

**Dee-Lish**—a tall hybrid tea with large pink flowers, healthy foliage, and a strong fragrance.

**Eyeconic® Leechee Lemonade**—a small floribunda cross that

has ivory double flowers with a pink center eye or blotch.

**Fired Up**—a fast growing plant with bright yellow and orange bicolor flowers that were noticed all season by many visitors to the Gardens.

**Look-A-Likes® Apple Dapple**—a fast growing ground cover shrub rose on its own roots with white apple blossom flowers all season. It tolerates higher pH soils, which makes it a good choice for city lots.

**Look-A-Likes® BougainFeelYa**—a shrub that produces sprays of wavy, cup-shaped dark red blooms all season.

**Peachy Keen**—a shrub rose with very disease resistant foliage. Flowers are shell pink with yellow centers.

**Icecap™**—a medium shrub rose that is very disease resistant. It has white double flowers all summer.

**Anna's Promise**—a tall upright grandiflora, the first to be released in the "Downton Abbey" collection. It is a golden tan and pink blush bicolor, with deep green glossy foliage and a slight fragrance.

**Take It Easy**—a disease-resistant medium-sized shrub with dark green foliage. It has clusters of dark red blooms all season with a mild tea fragrance.

**Watercolors Home Run**—a compact low-growing hardy shrub (Zone 4b). It has clusters of double flowers that are pink with yellow centers.

**Beverly**—a tall upright hybrid tea with double pink flowers, disease-resistant foliage, and a strong citrus fragrance.

**Heart Song**—a tall hybrid tea with double red flowers, disease-resistant foliage, and a slight fragrance.

**Happy Go Lucky**—a medium-sized upright grandiflora with clusters of large double flowers. It is disease resistant and has a moderate fragrance.

**Wedding Bells**—a tall hybrid tea with large pink flowers that were noticed by visitors to the Gardens. Foliage is disease resistant, and the blooms are very fragrant.

**Pink Home Run**—a hardy (zone 4) medium-sized shrub rose with medium-sized single pink blooms and dark green disease-resistant foliage. Although it is a shrub, there are ten of these roses growing as standards (tree form) in Virginia Clemens Rose Garden. The shrub form is hardy in the ground, but the tree roses will be overwintered in the greenhouse.

Deb tries to label all the roses. If you visit you should be able to find the name of a rose you admire. Feel free to ask the gardeners about the roses that interest you—they enjoy talking to visitors about the roses.



## Book Review

by Idella Moberg

**Andrea Wulf. *Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature, and the Shaping of the American Nation*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011.**

If presidential politics are closing in at every turn, stand back. Take a break. Take a long look at the presidency through the eyes of Andrea Wulf in her book *Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature, and the Shaping of the American Nation*. Wulf makes a compelling argument that the shapers of the new nation were shaped by the land itself. The land itself is the source of wealth and greatness for the American people. Our first four presidents were farmers and gardeners. Andrea Wulf's well-researched book retells our early American story by including stories about our founders who developed their farms and landscapes, visited great gardens. The founders of our nation had a great need for gardens to alleviate stress while they laid out a path for the nation.

Benjamin Franklin believed that the only honest way a nation could acquire wealth was by agriculture. In his mind farmers were the building blocks of the new nation. America, he knew, could be independent of Great Britain, and self-sufficient because they could live off the fertile American land. For years while he lived in Europe, he collected seeds and sent them home with the idea that American farmers could grow food as cash crops.

George Washington patriotically decided that Mount Vernon should be an American garden where only American trees were planted. His ornamental garden was also planted almost exclusively with American species.

James Madison argued that the protection of the environment was essential for the survival of the United States. He argued against a centralized government of commerce in favor of an agrarian view of the new nation that he believed would secure sufficient wealth for Americans.

John Adams was a New England farmer who, pressured by politics, preferred escaping to the countryside to spending time in the city. He could be himself in gardens and forests, fields and meadows. While in England trying to negotiate a trade treaty with Britain and the Barbary States, he and Thomas Jefferson discovered how important America had been in the creation of English gardens. They were populated with American plants.

Thomas Jefferson sought to hold onto both beauty and utility. He wrote a book that demonstrated how much larger American flora and fauna were in America than in Europe.

His botanical projects were not just patriotic activities to promote profitable agriculture. They were also a refuge from political quarrels.

American founding fathers were great for many reasons. They were intelligent and skilled diplomats and politicians. They were soldiers and businessmen. They had a vision for America that was amazing and great. And most of all, in their basic core of being, underlying everything, they were farmers and gardeners. The vision for America from its inception is that of farmers and gardeners. Andrea Wulf's telling of their story is both engaging and scholarly. She gives us food for thought as today we seek solutions for problems and struggle with issues facing our nation. It's a good read.

*Notes about the author:* Andrea Wulf was born in India, moved to Germany as a child, and now lives in Britain. She trained as a design historian at the Royal College of Art in Britain. She has written for *New York Times*, *LA Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Sunday Times*, and *Guardian*, and has lectured at the Royal Geographical Society, Royal Society in London, the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, Monticello, and the New York Public Library. Three times she has been a fellow of the International Center for Jefferson Studies at Monticello and was a writer in residence at the Eccles British Library.

*Other books by Andrea Wulf:* *The Brother Gardeners: Botany, Empire, and the Birth of an Obsession*; *Chasing Venus: The Race to Measure the Heavens*; *The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World*; and, with Emma Gieben-Gamal, *This Other Eden: Seven Great Gardens and 300 Years of English History*.

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## Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society 2015 Photo Contest Winners Announced November 15

### Best of Show

Peter Veljkovich, *"Fountain Detail"*

### Youth Hardscape

- 1st Zachary Schroeder, *"Beautiful Bend"*  
2nd Andrew Schroeder, *"Fountain of Joy"*  
3rd Annamaria Tomovic, *"A Perfect Path"*

### Youth Landscape

- 1st Abigail Gans, *"A Walk in the Park"*  
2nd Annamaria Tomovic, *"Enchanted Pine"*

### Adult Hardscape

- 1st Martin Gilchrist, *"Balustrade"*  
2nd Jenny Seil, *"Sunlit Shadow"*  
3rd Michelle Peterson, *"Safe Haven"*

### Adult Landscape

- 1st Martin Gilchrist, *"Hanging Garden"*  
2nd Jan Dornbush, *"1st Bloom"*  
3rd Lisa Henning, *"Shadow Path"*

The 2015 winners represent several local home towns: Saint Cloud—Peter Veljkovich, Michelle Peterson, Lisa Henning, Abigail Gans; Milaca—Martin Gilchrist; Sartell—Jenny Seil; Waite Park—Jan Dornbush; Princeton—Zachary Schroeder, Andrew Schroeder; Cold Spring—Annamaria Tomovic. Congratulations and good wishes to all the participants.

### Photo Contest Display Locations

- December 2015 .....Saint Cloud Convention Center, 10 Fourth Ave. S.  
January 2016 .....Saint Cloud Hospital, 1406 Sixth Ave. N.  
February 2016 .....Centra Care Plaza, 1900 Centra Care Circle  
March 2016 .....Quiet Oaks Hospice, 5537 Galaxy Road, Saint Augusta  
April-May 2016 .....Whitney Center, 1527 Northway Drive  
June 2016 .....US Bank, 1015 W. Saint Germain  
July 2016 (6/29-7/29) .....Paramount Theatre, 913 W. Saint Germain  
August-Sept. 2016 .....Saint Cloud Medical Group, 251 County Rd. 120  
October 2016 .....Waite Park Library, 253 Fifth Ave. N., Waite Park  
November-Dec. 2016 .....Saint Cloud Public Library, 1300 W. Saint Germain

Winning photos can also be seen on the MCBS website, [www.munsingerclemens.com](http://www.munsingerclemens.com)

### Co-Chairs

Joan Andersen  
Jill Florek

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William Cook  
Chris Felsch  
Donna Gorrell  
Jack Kelly  
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Articles and comments are welcomed.

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